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LBX-347

5 June 1946

CONTROL

TO : AB 17
INFO : AB 24
FROM : AB 16
SUBJECT : GAMBIT's Lebenslauf and Analysis by AB 16
REFERENCE: LBX/317, 21 May 1946
LWX/377, 28 May 1946

1. Supplementing our original vetting Forms, is attached a five-page Lebenslauf by GAMBIT, dated 28 May 1946, plus a three page addendum based on interrogation by AB 16.

2. We assume that this Lebenslauf and interrogation bring to an end our role in the vetting. The extraordinary pains to examine the agent's background were taken in this case because of the extremely delicate - vis-a-vis EMGUS - project she is undertaking, and the possibility that her association with CIANO might some day lead someone, through misunderstanding, to believe us to be harboring a wicked internationally notorious queen of spies.

Distribution:

- 2 AB 17 (with four attachments)
- ✓ 1 AB 24 (with one attachment)
- 1 Gambit file (with one attachment)

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I was born in 1919 in a small village near Weimar. My father had been an officer in the Air Forces, had no chance to get into the Reichswehr and was forced to do something else because he and my mother's family, too, lost all their money in the inflation. So he became a teacher and hated it although he was very popular with his pupils. He always treated me as a grown-up person and used to have long conversations with me which I only partly understood. I felt that he was not happy and later I knew why; he loved the German military tradition and hated the idea that Germany had been defeated (but he always acknowledged this defeat and refused the Dolchstoß-legend) and wanted her to be great and proud again, and on the other hand he disliked the reactionary nationalism typical for most officers and agreed with the peaceable methods adopted by the Government. He was deeply interested in politics but had no ambitions to take active part in the political life, probably because of his pessimism. He buried himself in books, preferably Schopenhauer and Spengler.

When I was ten years old, my parents moved to Weimar in order to send me to high school. I went at first to a Lyzeum (for girls only) but changed school after two years because I liked languages from the very beginning and wanted to have as many language-lessons as possible. So my father arranged for me to be admitted to the Realgymnasium (for boys only) where French, Latin and English were taught.

In 1934, I joined the BDM and liked it, especially the idea of a community without social classes. My parents both made objections but I found their arguments too conservative, and continued to dedicate much of my time to the BDM.

In 1935, my father thought about joining the new Air Forces but he was not too enthusiastic about it. He was not able to make up his mind about National Socialism and vacillated between hope and doubts. In August 1935, he fell suddenly ill and died a few days later. This was a terrible blow for me and it also changed my plans for the future. It had been understood between my father and me that I would study languages. Now, I resolved to make my studies as brief as possible because I felt a certain responsibility for my mother and younger brother.

In February 1938, I made Abitur. During the last year at school I had begun to dislike a good deal of the new ideas. I had spent most of my afternoons and all my evenings reading and had read every book I could get, from Dante to Dostojewski and from Stendhal to Ibsen, and no matter how much or little of them I understood, one thing became clear to me: that the BDM-education and also most of our lessons at school were a very narrowly limited affair. One of my best friends at that time was a student of medicine who was violently "anti". I agreed with him about most of the problems but I thought he was too negative. I said: One of the things they always tell us is certainly right - that we are the State of to-morrow. Now, if you and I and other young people want more personal liberty, why shouldn't we be able to change things in our State of to-morrow once the disagreeable Old-Fog ignorants and fanatics have died? This was rather childish, of course, but I believed it, and it was only much later that I recognized how lonely we were with our ideas in our own generation.

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After the Abitur, I was obliged to absolve the so-called Haushaltjahr in a household with at least 4 children. I did it in Dresden in the house of a rich factory-owner.

While I was in Dresden, my mother was informed that I had been transferred from BDM to the Party. Nobody had asked me before and I had never wanted to be a Party-member. I didn't attend any meeting but had to pay the monthly fees. Later on, when I was sent to Italy, I made use of the occasion to get lost for the Party and stopped paying, so I suppose that my membership was cancelled out.

In spring 1939, I went to a language-school in Leipzig and learnt Italian. I chose that school because of its concentration-method: it was possible to pass the examination after a few months. I did that in August, with the best mark. I had planned to go subsequently to Lausanne for half a year and get a diploma for French, too, and then begin to work and take care of myself so that my mother should have to pay only for my brother's studies. I had my papers already in order when War broke out and my Devisen-Genehmigung was withdrawn. My mother wanted me to stay in Weimar, so I went to the Arbeitsamt there and was assigned to SD-Abschnitt Weimar.

Until then, I didn't even know that this organization existed. I was at once sworn in to be silent and had to work as a mail-clerk. This and the whole atmosphere in the office made me very unhappy and, after some months, I asked the chief, SS-Sturmabfuhrer Hermann, to let me go away. As reason, I told him that I was good at languages and wanted to use them. He said he had to ask Berlin about it, because of the oath, and as a result, I was sent to Amt VI, in March 1940, as an interpreter for Italian. I had to translate the reports of Italian agents and read the Italian and Vatican newspapers and translate those articles which showed certain anti-German tendencies, a.s.o. In June 1941, I was sent to Rome as secretary to the Amt VI-Hauptbeauftragter, Zimmer. I did the same work as in Berlin and in addition to that I held the contact with most of the agents. In November, Zimmer made a big mistake and was called back to Berlin and I with him. I worked in Berlin again and in July 1942 was sent again to Rome, this time as secretary to the new Hauptbeauftragter, Looss, who had a cover job in the German embassy under the Police Attaché Kappler. Looss was not interested in the work and, therefore, let me do everything. When he joined the Waffen-SS, in January 1943, he was not replaced and I worked alone until August 1943. I liked Italy and the Italians in general and Rome in particular and I had no conflicts of conscience because the Italy-business was quite harmless and no SS-methods were adopted as long as the Axis existed.

During the years of my activity in Berlin and Rome, I had heard and seen very much and met many people, with the result that I hated the Nazi-system like hell. I have often found that books and articles are exaggerating when they speak about systems and methods and that people are mostly more human when you come to know them but what I saw in the SD was unbelievably mean and more than disgusting. They forced me to hope for the defeat of

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In June 1943, I was married to Oberstleutnant (then Hauptmann) Beetz whom I had known for many years. He liked his career without being fanatical and did not even dream of victory. As a member of the General Staff, he was well informed about military problems while I knew something about political questions so we could see quite clearly what was going on, and we had no illusions.

At the beginning of August 1943, I had come back to Berlin from Rome because all German women had to leave Italy after Mussolini had been arrested. One month later, Dr. Hoettl, then chief of the Italy-Referate, sent me to Allmannshausen as interpreter for Count Ciano. According to what I had heard about him in Rome and Berlin, I considered him as a corrupt and disagreeable character and I disliked my order. But I changed my mind about him the moment I saw him first, he was extremely natural and human and agreeable. We talked for a little while and he told me at once that I could not be "SD in my heart" and that he trusted me. I decided to help him. I reported to Berlin that I had won his confidence and mentioned his diaries. Dr. Hoettl spoke with Kaltenbrunner who was extremely interested

in the affair - not so much because of the damage these diaries could do to Germany but because of the possibility to use them as a weapon against Ribbentrop.

In the meantime, Mussolini had been liberated and formed the neo-fascist Government in Northern Italy. At the suggestion of the Foreign Office, represented by the ambassador Rahn and the Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer in Italy, Wolff, Count Ciano (to whom free travel to Spain had been promised) was delivered to the Italians and put in jail in Verona. This decision contrasted with the intentions of Amt VI and Kaltenbrunner, and it was easy for me to make them send me to Verona. I arrived there in November and saw Ciano every day in his cell, until he was executed. We worked very well together; he told me about the contents of his diaries and official documents and I reported those things which I knew would make my employers more and more greedy to get these papers. The diaries were on the Ciano estate near Lucca and the official documents in Rome but I wrote to Berlin that they were partly in Switzerland and partly in the Vatican. Ciano was willing to make the bargain and give the documents for his life but he was not very happy about it and would have preferred to use another way. So we arranged for a flight and had everything well organized when, at the last moment, a priest whose help we needed absolutely, lost his nerves and we had to give this plan up.

I was the only person who could see Ciano, and during all this time I stayed with him for hours every day and came to know him very well. Through him, many political problems finally became clear to me. He was deeply and sincerely unhappy about the war and sorry for Europe and he was personally unhappy

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too, about the fact that he had not resigned when Italy entered the war.

On January 2nd, 1944, I saw Kaltenbrunner and Dr. Hoettl in Innsbruck and the agreement was reached. I went to Rome and got the official documents: 7 volumes which were immediately brought to Hitler's Headquarters, and another one with all the documents about the Italo-German relations which I hid before my employers and gave to the Marchese Pucci, according to Ciano's wish, who brought them to Edda. This volume had never been mentioned and Ciano intended to keep it for himself. According to the agreement, the next move should have been Ciano's liberation and, in Switzerland, the delivery of the diaries. But I was then informed that Hitler himself had refused the plan. The trial had already begun, Ciano was sentenced to death and executed. I stayed with him to the last moment, and his conduct was admirable; in a certain sense he was even relieved that fate had prevented him from parting with the Germans.

Two days before, Edda had come to Verone, ready for the travel to Switzerland with her husband and me, and with the diaries around her waist. I informed her of the dirty trick that had been played on her husband and told her to go at once to Switzerland because I had heard that the SD planned to intern her. Her flight was a very heavy blow to the SD. Dr. Hoettl came at once to Verone and asked me to follow her to Switzerland and try to get the papers or at least to induce her to be silent. I was completely worn out but I wanted to save Edda's friend Pucci who had been caught and beaten by the Gestapo and was in Jail in Milan, so I asked to be accompanied by him and we went to Lugano. It was impossible to see Edda who had been interned by the Swiss in a convent. We tried to get in touch with the British I.S. representative in Lugano but he didn't receive Pucci. I wrote a letter to Edda saying that her husband had wanted her to care for safety first and be quiet for the duration of the war which was true and was also what the SD wanted. It was in my own interest, too, because I was afraid she could mention the role I had played in her flight and that would have meant the end for me, of course.

In April, I went back to Como, had a fortnight's holiday with my husband and went to Berlin where I saw Kaltenbrunner who wanted me to go to Switzerland again and try to see Edda with the help of an Italian priest who had already visited her. I stayed in Como for a long time waiting for the Swiss visa which I never got and found out that this priest knew almost everything because Edda and Pucci trusted him. He didn't expose me but made me feel that I was in his hands. He told the SD that there were more papers of Ciano left in Italy and that he hoped to find out where. I knew about papers in 3 different places and remembered that Pucci

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had told me the most unimportant ones were in Ramiola with a doctor for the partisans. I used every occasion to run the priest down but was still afraid of what could happen and finally decided to fetch the papers from Ramiola myself which I did in a rather elaborate way and without hurting the doctor. To my surprise and grief, these papers were those about the Italo-German relations I had brought from Rome myself. I managed to translate all these documents at home in Weimar and made carbons. I finished this work in autumn 1944, then I asked for more homework pretending that my mother was ill, and when this was done, in January 1945, I lost every contact with Amt VI and stopped working.

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TO: E SHOWN TO
28 May 1946

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ADDENDUM TO LEBENS LAUF WRITTEN BY H.B.

1. The foregoing lebenslauf was written by subject upon the request that she write a short biography, highlighting the economic, cultural, and educational influences under which she felt her past and present political ideas had developed. While her life story has been the subject of extensive previous interrogation, particularly in connection with her work for the Sicherheitsdienst in Rome between June 1941 and November 1941 and July 1942 and August 1943, and therefore on some points has been thoroughly reported, the following questions have been posed to subject with the intention of making clearer her life history to those to whom the previous interrogation reports are not conveniently accessible.

2. In October 1939 when subject reported to the Arbeitsamt in Weimar, there was no compulsion for so doing. No women at that time were compelled to register, but subject not wanting "to stay at home and live on my mother's money", did register. She was assigned to the SD-Abschnitt Weimar without knowing what the organization was. Being without business experience of any kind, - subject was twenty at the time - she was assigned a job as a mail-clerk. The "oath" to which subject refers in the Lebenslauf is the oath that she, as a new employee of the SD, would not talk about anything which she saw or read in the office. This was interpreted by SS-Sturmabfuhrer Hermann to prevent his releasing her outright, - after she became unhappy with the work.

3. Subject's impression of Guido Zimmer for whom she worked the first time she was assigned to Rome was that he was stupid in his work but not with his personal advancement, selfish, and lazy. Politically, ZIMMER was an opportunist "who saw to it that he was on the right side". Subject elaborates, that had Germany won the war, ZIMMER would have made an SS career for himself in the SD. The "mistake" to which she alludes in the text above, was ZIMMER's blowing to the Auswärtiges Amt in Rome the fact that the SD was, against Hitler's orders, operating in Rome. This he did by reporting a report of a planned attempt against Mussolini's life to the Gesandter Bismarck, rather than through SD channels to Amt VI in Berlin. The resultant embarrassment to RSHA, Berlin, led to his immediate recall. Subject had warned ZIMMER that he should report through channels but he failed to heed her advice.

4. Delving into the evolution of subject's dislike for the Nazi regime, the following stages appear. As noted, her father, although a career soldier, had not been one of the German clique who swallowed the notion that the German Army had not been defeated in the last war. This bit of objectivity on his part was only a small factor in the development of subject's ideas, however. Through her extensive reading of novels written in other countries, subject developed

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an intellectual curiosity and independence of judgment (discernible strongly today) which led to the following incident in the BDM in 1937. Because she was a quick learner she was chosen for a four week leadership school by the leader of her group. Upon returning from the school this leader informed her that she had been rejected and showed to subject the report written on her by the school authorities, which read: "Too much opposition", which subject interpreted as meaning her unwillingness to accept as gospel what she was told without formulating her own conclusions independently.

5. And so, in the Weimar stage of her upbringing, subject had only developed a mental independence from regimented thinking. When Poland was invaded, she thought it perhaps proper to rescue the Germans in Poland who were being mistreated there. Her transfer to Amt VI, however, where she came across confidential intelligence reports, shocked her into realizing that Germany (to wit, through the TANNENBERG affair, on which General LAHUSEN has so extensively testified before the Nuremberg Tribunal) had aggressively started that war. This and other planned diplomatic lies by the Nazi high command, such as documents saying we shall tell the French this because it will quiet them, led her to conclude that each Hitlerian military success would but lead to another, since in the first attack against Poland there was no moral justification for his actions.

6. Rome brought the third and decisive stage in the evolution of subject's complete lack of respect, now grown to disgust, for the Nazi hierarchy. The leaders there, SS, Auswärtiges Amt, Wehrmacht all declaimed upon the glories of the New Order for Europe. The idea of a New Order in Europe had lost for subject whatever lustre it might have held - but she might have had some personal respect for the Nazi representatives of that new order had they at least partially lived up to the faith they so extensively extolled among themselves. However, she found that they had little or no interests in German-Italian relations, in the progress of the war, or the matters that should bear upon their claimed idealism, but instead the SS, Wehrmacht, and Foreign Office were engaged in fight among themselves. Individual officers intrigued for power and personal gain - in short the New Order was "rotten" on the inside. To this mounting disgust with the conduct of German leaders, grew in sharp contrast subject's fondness for the Italians whom she viewed as tolerant, not grasping for power, not hypocritical - but rather ordinary human beings not pretending or aiming to be anything more than they were.

7. In post script to the earlier observations on subject's humanism and how much of it grew from extensive reading, she was asked whether her family had been particularly humanistic

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She replied that her father was of this rather un-Teutonic trait. It is interesting that CIANO asked the same question after meeting subject, only he asked whether she had an Italian or French grandmother.

8. Subject's husband, whom she has known as a friend of the family since she was eleven, is the son of a rich factory-owning mother who has long been a close friend of subject's mother. Like subject, he is bookish but more religious than she, she says.

9. In terse summary of her relationship with Count CIANO, subject says that she found Ciano very "sympathish" and admired his character and his ideas. She was also grateful to him for trusting her so much, and because he - by answering her queries on politics - clarified many longoutstanding problems which had been on her mind. Asked as to her husband's reaction to this relationship, whom subject had once described in an off-moment as the jealous type, subject replied that he didn't like it, - but that was because he didn't care for my working in the SD. "Why didn't he liked it?" "Did you ever hear of a Wehrmacht officer who liked the SD?" "Of course, my husband was jealous too. He knew that I wasn't unfaithful to him, but he was jealous in a spiritual way." "Then, you rather liked his being jealous in this way?" "No."

10. After ceasing work for Amt VI in January 1945, subject remained in Weimar until the end of the war. In June 1945 she was interrogated by Mr. Lawrence De Neufville and Lt. French. These officers brought her to Wiesbaden, and then to the Third Army Interrogation Center at Freising from which she was released in September. At that time she was released pursuant to a project drafted by us, joining the Red Cross in Bavaria, but the project failed, and so the present one in Berlin was formulated and subject transferred here.

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